

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the Abstract with the following amended Abstract:

Disclosed is an assembly for assisting in the attachment of an appliance ~~applicant~~ such as a winch to a surface (e. g. deck) of a watercraft such as a sailing boat. Fixing screws are retained in apertures in the winch by retaining means such as lock washers. The assembly of the winch and screws may therefore be produced at a location remote from the watercraft, the retaining means ~~meanings~~ holding the screws against rotation during transportation and during fixing of the appliance to the surface of the watercraft.

Please replace the paragraph on page 1, line 29 to page 2, line 5 with the following:

The inventor has realized ~~realised~~ that this approach to fixing a winch to a deck is disadvantageously labor ~~labour~~ intensive and difficult. By the present invention, the inventor has addressed these problems by holding each screw with respect to the winch using a retaining element. Advantageously, the screw may then be fitted to the winch during manufacture of the winch itself. This avoids the need for disassembling the winch during the process of fixing the winch to the deck.

Please replace the paragraph on page 2, line 6 to line 11 with the following:

The inventor has also realized ~~realised~~ that the inventive concept also has broad applicability to appliances other than winches. Accordingly, in a general aspect, the present invention provides, for an appliance for attachment to a surface

of a vessel, a retaining element for retaining a fastening element in place with respect to the appliance.

Please replace the paragraph on page 9, line 2 to line 6 with the following:

Fig. 1 shows a winch assembly 10 including a winch 12, fixing screws 36 ~~[[14]]~~ and lock washers 38 ~~[[16]]~~. The winch includes base plate 34 ~~48~~, drum 20 and top cap (not shown). In the exemplary winch shown, there are five through-holes extending through the base plate for location of screws 36 ~~[[14]]~~.

Please replace the paragraph on page 9, line 7 to line 13 with the following:

The assembly shown in Fig. 1 is produced as part of the winch production process. It is relatively straightforward, as part of that process, to incorporate screws 36 ~~[[14]]~~ and lock washers 38 ~~[[16]]~~ into the base plate 34 ~~48~~ during manufacture of the winch. Thus, when the drum 20 and top plate are applied, the assembly is ready for transportation or shipping to the vessel to which it is to be attached.